

SENATE BILL 720

By Yager

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 4, relative to postsecondary financial assistance from net lottery proceeds for middle college students.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-4-902, is amended by adding the following language as a new subdivision:

"Middle college" means a program operated by an eligible public two-year postsecondary institution in partnership with an LEA that permits students in the fall semester of their junior year in high school to enter the eligible public two-year postsecondary institution and to earn both a high school diploma and an associate degree in two (2) years;

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 4, Part 9, is amended by adding the following language as a new section:

(a) To be eligible for a Tennessee middle college scholarship a student shall:

(1) Not be ineligible for the scholarship under § 49-4-904;

(2) Be classified as an in-state student under the rules of the board of regents on the date of enrollment in middle college and on the date of reenrollment in a subsequent academic year;

(3) Be admitted to, and enrolled in, an eligible public two-year postsecondary institution that is partnering with an LEA to offer middle college in the fall semester of the student's junior year in high school;

(4) Make application to both the student's high school and to the eligible public two-year postsecondary institution for admission to middle college; and

(5) Make application for the scholarship as prescribed by TSAC.

(b)

(1) To maintain eligibility for the Tennessee middle college scholarship, a student shall meet all nonacademic requirements of the program, maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.75 at the end of each semester for all postsecondary courses attempted under the Tennessee middle college scholarship, and be enrolled full-time.

(2) If a student drops out of middle college, fails to maintain eligibility for the Tennessee middle college scholarship at the end of any semester, or fails to maintain full-time status, the student shall not be able to regain the scholarship.

(c) A student may receive a Tennessee middle college scholarship until the first of the following events:

(1) The student has earned an associate degree or completed high school; or

(2) Two (2) years have passed from the date of the student's enrollment as a middle college student in an eligible public two-year postsecondary institution.

(d) Subject to the amounts appropriated by the general assembly and any provision of law relating to a shortfall in funds available for postsecondary financial assistance from the net proceeds of the state lottery, a Tennessee middle college scholarship awarded to a student enrolled in middle college shall be equal to the eligible two-year postsecondary institution's tuition and mandatory fees for full-time attendance for each semester.

(e)

(1) A student who successfully completes middle college and receives both a high school diploma and an associate degree shall be eligible to receive a

Tennessee HOPE scholarship at the time of transfer to an eligible four-year postsecondary institution in pursuit of a baccalaureate degree, if the student:

- (A) Meets all nonacademic requirements for the Tennessee HOPE scholarship;
- (B) Meets the requirements of § 49-4-911(a)(1) or (a)(2);
- (C) Transfers to the eligible four-year postsecondary institution no later than sixteen (16) months after graduation from high school; and
- (D) Applies for the Tennessee HOPE scholarship.

(2) To continue to be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE scholarship at the end of subsequent semesters when eligibility is checked, the student shall meet the requirements of § 49-4-911.

(3) A student who received an associate degree through middle college shall be eligible for the Tennessee HOPE scholarship until the student reaches a terminating event under § 49-4-913. Semester hours attempted and full-time equivalent semesters enrolled in as a middle college student shall count toward the limits on semester hours attempted and full-time equivalent semesters under § 49-4-913. The five-year period in which a student is eligible for a Tennessee HOPE scholarship shall start at the time the student enrolls in the eligible public two-year postsecondary institution as a middle college student, but shall not include any time between the receipt of the associate degree and enrollment in an eligible four-year postsecondary institution.

(f)

(1) A student who enrolls in middle college and receives a Tennessee middle college scholarship, but does not complete middle college and does not receive an associate degree shall be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE scholarship

upon enrolling in an eligible postsecondary institution no later than sixteen (16) months after completion of high school, if the student:

- (A) Is not ineligible for the scholarship under § 49-4-904;
- (B) Meets all requirements of § 49-4-905(a); and
- (C) Meets the requirements of § 49-4-907 or § 49-4-908.

(2) Semester hours attempted and full-time equivalent semesters enrolled in as a middle college student shall count toward the limits on semester hours attempted and full-time equivalent semesters under § 49-4-913. The five-year period in which a student is eligible for a Tennessee HOPE scholarship shall include any time in which the student was enrolled in middle college, but shall not include any time in which the student was attending high school after leaving middle college or any time between completion of high school and enrollment in an eligible postsecondary institution.

(3) Financial assistance through the Tennessee middle college scholarship for courses attempted in middle college shall reduce the amount of any subsequent award of the Tennessee HOPE scholarship on a dollar per dollar basis.

(g) A student who does not receive a Tennessee middle college scholarship in the fall semester of the junior year in high school shall not be eligible to receive a Tennessee middle college scholarship at any later time.

(h) No retroactive award of a Tennessee middle college scholarship shall be made under this section.

(i) A student receiving a Tennessee middle college scholarship shall not be eligible for a dual enrollment grant under § 49-4-930.

(j) The award of Tennessee middle college scholarships shall commence with the 2019-2020 academic year.

SECTION 3. TSAC, in consultation with the state board of education, is authorized to promulgate rules to effectuate the purposes of this act. The rules shall be promulgated in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, compiled in title 4, chapter 5.

SECTION 4. This act shall not be construed to be an appropriation of funds, and no funds shall be obligated or expended pursuant to this act unless the funds are specifically appropriated by the general appropriations act.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.